

## Sample Slab Update #20 – July 2017

The newsletter for sample slab collectors

### Market Notes

June 2017 was a busy month for sample slabs, with 180 sales on eBay. Looking at sales trends, the busiest months are usually February, June, and September. The record, for example, was 215 sales in June 2016. In each of these three months, PCGS issues a new batch of samples at the Long Beach Expo and sellers bring their new holders to market, often accompanied by other pieces from their collections or inventory. For example, eBay seller elitecoinco of Bakersfield, California, entered the sample market with dozens of pieces in late June, mostly PCGS holders issued at Long Beach 2013 – present. Collectors continue to pursue these coins, especially those for the PCGS Treasure Hunt registry set. With several often coming to market at the same time, however, prices tend to be highest for the first slabs offered and lower for the last few.



One of the new Treasure Hunt slabs that sold well was this Proof-70 dime, part of a series of 1983-S proof coins issued at the February 2017 show. Grades on Treasure Hunt coins usually do not affect prices, but anyone would take notice of a perfect 70. The holder earned \$61.01, compared to \$22.50 for a Proof-69 example that sold a few minutes earlier. This is the only Mint State-70 or Proof-70 Treasure Hunt coin to sell on eBay so far.

Another noteworthy piece in the same post-Long Beach sale by market maker Mike Kittle was a previously unknown PCGS

luncheon slab from January 5, 2007. This is one of the earliest luncheon slabs and, with a Silver Eagle, has a better coin than most. I am making a list of all known PCGS luncheon slabs and was happy to learn of this new type, which auctioned for \$126.

Collectors continue to move towards date sets of samples and unusual or new dates of otherwise common types often attract interest. Although not a great deal of money, a fresh PCGS 2017-D shield cent sample earned \$26.85, compared with the under \$10 values that these samples usually bring.



### **Sample Slab Collector Meeting Set for the Denver ANA – Thursday, August 3 5:30 PM**

If you are going to the Denver ANA, come to the sample slab collectors meeting on Thursday, August 3 at 5:30 pm. I will find a location when I arrive in Denver and send the place to the mailing list. Four top collectors are already confirmed as coming. This will be a modest and informal gathering without an agenda or presentation – only a few collectors talking about our interest. Feel free to bring a show and tell. The main attraction is to talk about our interest with a small group of like-minded enthusiasts.



### **How much does condition matter in the sample market?**

Condition is vital in nearly all types of antiques and collectibles, and more important in coins than anywhere else. The market rewards common coins in uncommon grades. In our collecting niche, grade can lower the value of a sample, but seldom increases it.

Problems with the holder can lower prices. The PCGS doily is one of the most desirable types and prices remain high at about \$150 average, even when more than one appears for sale at the same time. One with a missing outer ring and other damage, however, recently auctioned for just \$66.

Conversely, eBay listings sometimes point out that a particular sample has better plastic than average. Given the choice, any collector would certainly choose a pristine slab over one with typical small scuffs. Condition can be a tiebreaker when multiple similar slabs appear. Collectors have not, however, been willing to pay more for holders in better condition.

Instead, demand and rarity are the greatest drivers of a slab's value. Keep using precautions to preserve your holders in good condition, but don't be afraid to buy slabs with typical wear.

### **Sample Slab Issuer Brian E. Fanton Receives Farran Zerbe Award**

Brian E. Fanton of Hiawatha, Iowa, who issued ANACS and ICG sample slabs, received the 2017 Farran Zerbe Memorial Award for Distinguished Service, usually considered the highest honor of the American Numismatic Association. As described in the [July 2017 issue of The Numismatist](#), Brian attended 25 ANA Summer Seminars, teaching classes for several of those years. During at least three classes, he had third party graders make customized sample slabs for his students.

2003: page 174 of [Sample Slabs](#) second edition, Catalog # ICG-025-1-53, Louisiana quarter

2004: page 56, ANACS-025-2-1, Iowa quarter

2005: page 189, ICG-025-2-3, Iowa quarter

Congratulations to Brian on his well-deserved award.



### **Book News – The Sample Slab**

Instead of talking about my book, let's take a minute to discuss an upcoming new book by a different author. Isaiah Hageman has a catalog on the subject, The Sample Slab, in draft form. I saw a version of the book, and its strong point is commentary on each cataloged piece. If you would like to learn more, or to send photos to Isaiah, reach him at [isaiahh1215@gmail.com](mailto:isaiahh1215@gmail.com).

Back to the Sample Slabs, second edition, book. Buy it for \$29 with shipping (\$12 for the PDF download) at [SampleSlabBook.com](http://SampleSlabBook.com) or [eBay](http://eBay). As always, I also sell the printed book in person for only \$19 check or cash. Find me at the Denver ANA Tuesday 8/1 – Thursday 8/3. Send me an email and we can exchange phone numbers or otherwise make arrangements.

### **Buying and Selling**

#### **Buying**

I always need samples from obscure graders such as TruGrade, NuGrade, and Global. I also buy sample collections or quality single pieces. Send me an email at [dauidschwager@hotmail.com](mailto:dauidschwager@hotmail.com).

## Selling

Sample Slab Update Sale #4 was not only the biggest sale yet, but also the most successful, with about 75% of the lots by value sold, mostly in the first weekend. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the “Send Dave to Denver” fund. With so many items sold, I have only one (although a big one) offering this issue.

**Lot of 15 common sample slabs – One ICG, 10 NGC, Four PCGS.** This is a good starter set for a beginning collector or an opportunity for a large-scale collector to add to holdings. **\$55** including shipping. They are:

	Catalog #	Denom	Type	Year	Serial
<u>1</u>	IGC-025-1-58	Quarter	Delaware	1999-P	
<u>2</u>	NGC-025-4-27	Quarter	Indiana	2002-P	151519-044
<u>3</u>	NGC-025-4-41	Quarter	Missouri	2003-P	1761593-087
<u>4</u>	NGC-025-4-41	Quarter	Missouri	2003-P	1761593-089
<u>5</u>	NGC-025-4-41	Quarter	Missouri	2003-P	1761593-097
<u>6</u>	NGC-025-4-65	Quarter	Texas	2004-P	1944617-115
<u>7</u>	NGC-025-4-65	Quarter	Texas	2004-P	1944617-160
<u>8</u>	NGC-025-4-7	Quarter	Delaware	1999-P	005684-090
<u>9</u>	NGC-025-4-79	Quarter	Florida	2004-P	1899582-009
<u>10</u>	NGC-025-4-79	Quarter	Florida	2004-P	1899582-037
<u>11</u>	NGC-100-9-7	Dollar	WH Harrison	2009-D	2053467-158
<u>12</u>	PCGS-001-5-3	Cent	Shield	2010-D	416671.00/1234567890
<u>13</u>	PCGS-001-9-3	Cent	Wheat	1920	
<u>14</u>	PCGS-005-4-5	Nickel	Bison	2005-P	4158.00/1234567890
<u>15</u>	PCGS-005-4-7	Nickel	Bison	2005-P	4159.00/800-447-8848

To buy, email me at [davidschwager@hotmail.com](mailto:davidschwager@hotmail.com) to verify they are still available, and I will send you an invoice through PayPal. Or, mail me a check for a 5% discount. Free shipping with all orders.

If you would like to place a brief buy or sell ad in the next Sample Slab Update at no charge, please email me.

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